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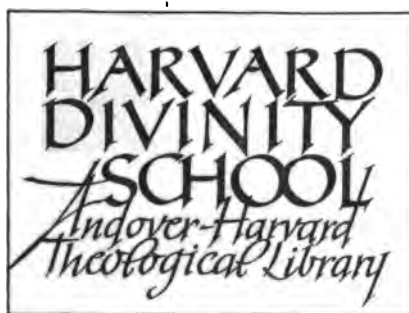
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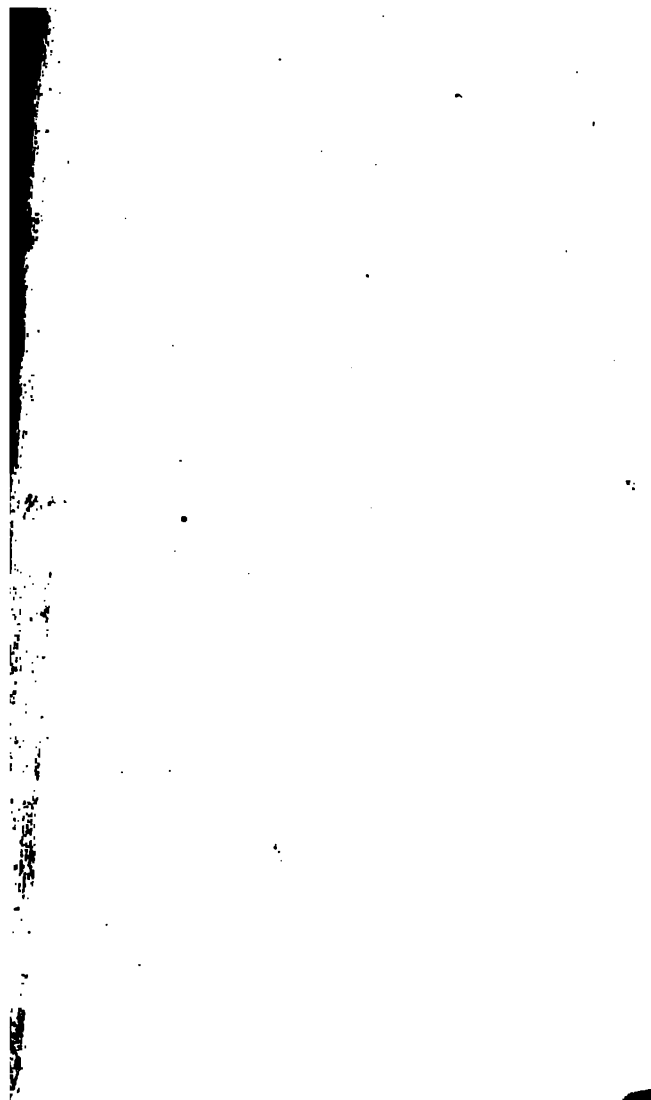
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THE  
NEW  
DISPENSATION.





500, Keshab Chandra  
= THE

# NEW DISPENSATION

[OR THE MINISTER'S EXPOSITION OF IT.]

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*THIRD EDITION.*

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Calcutta :  
BRAHMO TRACT SOCIETY.  
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## PREFACE.

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IT has been thought proper to present within a short compass all that KESHUB CHUNDER SEN thought about the New Dispensation. The following pages contain selections, mostly from his writings in the *Sunday Mirror* (now defunct) and the weekly journal, called the *New Dispensation*, of which he was for some time the Editor and to which he could merely contribute when last taken ill at Simla. The articles are not arranged chronologically, but something like a method has been attempted in accordance with which they have been arranged under certain headings, intelligible enough to the ordinary reader. A complete work on the New Dispensation is not possible as yet ; but the public would like to possess, in a convenient and accessible shape, all the great ideas and principles given to the world from time to time by its chief Apostle and preacher.

23rd August, 1884.



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THE  
NEW DISPENSATION.  
OUR CREED.

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- (1) ONE God.
  - (2) One Church.
  - (3) One Scripture.
  - (4) Eternal Progress of the Soul.
  - (5) Communion of Prophets and Saints.
  - (6) Fatherhood and Motherhood of God ;  
Brotherhood of man and Sisterhood of woman.
  - (7) Harmony of Knowledge and Holiness,  
Love and Work, Yoga, and Asceticism in their  
highest development.
  - (8) Loyalty to sovereign.
- 

WHAT IS THE NEW DISPENSATION ?

LET us sing the glory of the New Dispensation, the latest Revelation of our heavenly Father unto us, His children and servants in India.

---



Blessed are they who believe in the New Gospel, for they shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

The New Dispensation is the harmony of all scriptures and all saints and all sects.

It is the harmony of reason and faith, of inspiration and science, of devotion and duty.

It is the harmony of the ascetic and the householder, of the east and the west, of the ancient and the modern.

It is the harmony of the Veda and the Purana, of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

It is the harmony of yoga and bhakti.

It is the harmony of youth and age, of man and woman.

It is an explanation of the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

It is an explanation of the symbolic rites of Baptism and Sacrament, Hom and Jhanda.

It is an explanation of pantheism and polytheism.

It is an explanation of the philosophy of the Hindu pantheon with its millions of divinities.

It is the Church of the One Supreme, and *tolerates not the least idolatry.*

**It is the Church of Universal Brotherhood,  
and tolerates not the least sectarianism.**

**It is the religion of an ever-working and  
ever-watchful Providence.\***

**It is the religion of universal inspiration.**

**It is the religion of God-consciousness.**

**It is the religion of a Speaking and Teaching  
God.**

**It is the religion of pure science.**

**It is a protest against every form of decep-  
tion, superstition, lying and imposture.**

**It is a protest against all manner of sin and  
iniquity.**

**It is Apostolical Faith.**

**It is the communion of saints.**

**It is Christ's kingdom of heaven.**

**It is the dawn of the Satya Yug or the Golden  
Age of universal peace.**

**It is the return of the world to primitive in-  
fancy and innocence.**

**It is the advance of the world into regene-  
rated and second manhood.**

**It is the union of all flesh with the Son of  
God.**

**It is the immediate intercommunion of divi-  
nity and humanity without mediators.**

It is the mystic dance of all saints and prophets in the heart.

It is the return of exiled Buddhism to India.

It is Hindustan's pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

It is the union of the Vedas and the Puranas.

It is a joint festival of Hindu and Mahomedan devotees.

It is a meeting place for *amirs* and *faqirs*.

It is the old man's return to childhood.

It is the reconciliation of reason and faith after centuries of separation.

It is an international exhibition of whatever is excellent in different countries and climes.

It is the encyclopædia of universal religion.

It is all nations singing in unison under the Grand Bandmaster.

It is heaven's return visit to the earth.

It is the resurrection of ancient prophets and apostles.

It is Christ's second advent.

It is Asia's protest against Europe's agnosticism

It is Europe's protest against Asia's mysticism.

It is the worship of Harmony.

It is the equilibrium of forces in the spirit-world.

It is the balance of power among the reigning prophet chiefs of the world.

It is the science of religion.

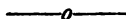
It is the reconciliation of apparent contradictions.

It is the invisible Westminster Abbey, where the enmities of fifty generations lie buried and forgotten.

It is the philosophy of the Trinity.

It is the Third Testament.

It is the advent of the promised Comforter.



## IS THERE ANY THING NEW ?



Is NOT 'seeing' the Spirit-God new ? Is not 'hearing' His spirit-whispers new ? Is not the worship of the Supreme spirit as Mother new ? Are not interviews with Moses and Socrates new ? Are not pilgrimages to Faraday and Carlyle new ? Is not the vow of taking no thought for the morrow, amid nineteenth century civilization, new ? Is not Yoga which is always conscious of duality, new ? Is not the doctrine I and my brother are one, new ? Is not the golden rule, 'Do unto others more than you would have them do to you' new ? Is not the absorption of

prophets and saints new? Is not the chain of logical sequence which binds all dispensations new? Is it not new to regard the Hindu devotees of the New Dispensation as apostles and spiritual descendants of Christ and Paul? Is not the eclecticism new, which blends together in perfect harmony the deepest communion, the most advanced philosophy, the most enthusiastic philanthropy, the sweetest love, the strictest asceticism? Is not the science of religion new, which connects the prayers and prophecies, the asceticism and inspiration of all religions by common laws and universal principles? Is it not new to combine Catholic, Protestant, Baptist and Methodist in Christ, and Christ, Moses, and Socrates in God? Is it not new to be an ascetic householder, a mystical scientist, a wise enthusiast, an inspired worker?



## THE EUROPEAN SIDE.



THE FAITH that has come down to us from heaven has two aspects, the one eastern and the other western. It has a European side, and the other side is eminently Asiatic. The East loves

and honours the New Dispensation as its own; and so does the West. Those traits in it which are of the European style are as follow :—

The New Dispensation is thoroughly scientific. It hates whatsoever is unscientific. It has an abhorrence of delusions and myths.

It is empirical, and relies upon observation and experiment. It has no hypothesis; and it takes nothing on trust.

It stands the severest logical tests, and is made up of demonstrable truths.

It is supported by reasoning, inductive and deductive.

It harmonizes with the latest discoveries of science and keeps pace with the progress of philosophy and exact science.

It touches not, and cautiously avoids supernaturalism, and the whole domain of miracles and prophecies.

Dreams, visions, trance, illumination, spirit-trapping, reveries, it discountenances.

It has no faith in a visible or audible Divinity or in spirits that speak or are spoken to.

It acknowledges no infallible human guide, no infallible book.

It is prepared to reject every doctrine which

science may oppose or new discoveries may explode.

The New Dispensation loves history.

It trusts no narrative or story unsupported by evidence.

It reveres history, because it believes in Providence and sees God in history.

It sits at the feet of all epochs and ages and gathers the lessons they offer.

It does not ignore or deny a single fact of history.

It treats all history with the profoundest reverence as God's scripture.

The New Dispensation is thoroughly practical.

It is the religion of activity and energy.

It is the worship of industry.

It deprecates laziness and indolence as a sin against God.

It is the service of man in varied fields of philanthropic usefulness.

It is the religion of study, researches, criticism, thought and dialectics.

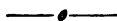
It is never-ceasing godly work.

It deals not in barren speculations and theories. It has no love for things chimerical and shadowy.

*The lazy mendicant, the sleepy faquir, the*

fanciful theorist, the speechless quietist find no place in it.

In the temple of work it adores the God of Force.



## THE ASIATIC SIDE.



THE Asiatic and oriental aspect of the New Dispensation remains to be explained. Born in the east, amid its peculiar traditions and influences, it is no wonder that it should grow as an Asiatic institution with marked Asiatic features. However occidental its development may have been, its root is essentially oriental. Its industry and dialectics, its intellectual and practical character tell us it is a western system of faith. But there are other features in it which show forth its eastern origin. Wherein consists this oriental character we show below.

The New Dispensation is profoundly emotional. It hates dryness.

It is the religion of tender love and sweet affection.

Faith without love, work without love, it doth not countenance.



It affords the fullest culture to all the higher emotions and impulses of the heart.

Its wisdom is the loving knowledge of God, its work is the loving service of God.

It possesses a heart overflowing with the milk of love and eyes glistening with tears of devotion.

It makes all things sweet by its touch.

The New Dispensation is eminently poetical.

Its thoughts and sentiments are poetical, its language is the language of poetry.

Plain dull insipid prose does not accord with its imaginative Spirit.

It represents the golden age of religion, when all looks bright and joyous, and heaven and earth shine in fascinating colors.

It clothes truth in the soft silken drapery of imagination.

It deals largely in metaphors and allegories, in parables and rich imagery.

It is a born poet that lisps in numbers and spontaneously talks poetry.

The New Dispensation is transcendently spiritual.

Its eyes are naturally turned inward and they see vividly the Spirit-world within.

It prefers the soul-kingdom to the kingdom of the senses. It abhors materialism.

It always magnifies the spirit, and spiritualizes everything it touches.

• It sees with the spirit-eye and hears with the spirit-ear. It drinks inspiration.

It builds the eternal city, the kingdom of heaven within, and dwells therein all the spare hours of the day.

The New Dispensation is the religion of poverty and asceticism.

Its motto is "vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

[ It loves and honours simplicity. In dress and diet it is always poor and abstemious.

It shuns carnality and the riches and honours of the world as temptations, and prefers life in the hermitage.

Humble and poor is the man of the New Dispensation.

— o —

## OBJECTS OF THE NEW DISPENSATION.

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UNLESS people know the sundry important purposes which the Church of the New Dispensation is designed and destined to subserve in

the economy of Providence they can hardly form a correct idea of the nature of this great movement in India. Those who look upon it as a mere Hindu reformed Church or a Hindu edition of Western Deism must make endless blunders and hazard absurd opinions regarding its past, present and future. Nor can those critics form a correct estimate of it who regard it as a man-made system of faith, a product of human ingenuity. The New Dispensation is Heaven's gift to the world in the fulness of time. And Providence in giving to a sinful world this heavenly faith has certain deep and important objects to fulfil. Let us see what these purposes are. It is the object of the Church of the New Dispensation :—

1. To reconcile and harmonize the various systems of religion in the world.
2. To make all churches in the East and the West one undivided and universal Church of God.
3. To trace the unity of all Dispensations.
4. To trace the line of logical succession among all the prophets in ancient and modern times.
5. To reduce the truths of all scriptures to *one eternal and unwritten scripture.*

6. To establish universal brotherhood by uprooting caste.

7. To give a rational explanation of the symbolism and the sacramentalism in which the ideas of great minds are fossilized.

8. To construct the Science of Religion by adopting the comparative method.

9. To found Christ's kingdom of Heaven.

10. To kill idolatry by taking its life and spirit out of it.

11. To explain polytheism, pantheism, and monotheism in relation to each other.

12. To explain the mystery of the Trinity and to show unity in Trinity.

13. To reconcile ancient faith and modern science.

14. To reconcile philosophy and inspiration.

15. To reconcile asceticism and civilization.

16. To reconcile pure Hinduism and pure Christianity.

17. To harmonize the East and West, Asia and Europe, antiquity and modern thought.

18. To keep ever open the portals of Heaven's Inspiration.

19. To establish the doctrines of atonement, incarnation, communion of saints, scriptural

infallibility, apostolical succession, yoga and inspiration upon a new basis.

20. To turn men's hearts from physical to moral miracles.

21. To make science supersede supernaturalism.

22. To preach Christ as the son of God, and the Logos in all prophets before and after him.

23. To honour Socrates as the teacher of Self-knowledge, Moses as the teacher of Old Testament Ethics, Buddha as the teacher of Nirvana, Mahomet as the teacher of the Unity of God, Chaitanya as the teacher of Loving Devotion.

24. To educate man and woman and give them a sweet and a heavenly home.

25. To bring down religion from the clouds of man's daily life on earth.

26. To make the home and the Church as sacred as the Church.

27. To put down all manner of sin and promote all manner of purity by the power of prayer.

28. To exalt purity above doctrine, life above profession, spirit above letter.

## THE NEW DISPENSATION ARRAIGNED.

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THE WORLD accuses thee, O New Dispensation, of being mystical and unpractical. They say thou dreamest, and lovest solitude and quietism. Wilt thou answer ?

I am not a mystic, most learned Judge, and I hate the dull and dreamy life of the recluse. In work I rejoice. I have regular office-work, six to eight hours daily, reading, writing, discouraging &c. I have schools for educating boys and girls, I have journals, political and theological, magazines for women and children ; and also public meetings and lectures. I have charities for the poor and the helpless. I have a pice paper which educates thousands. I am diligent in household matters, and think it not dishonorable to use the spade or the saw or do the menial's work. My people do not sleep during the day ; they keep up till midnight.

They charge thee with being averse to reading. Dost thou not prefer blind faith to reason, and ignorance to education ?

I identify faith and reason. I worship my God in the Temple of Science. Come into my

---

study and in my library you will find, among books which I constantly use, philosophy, science, the writings of the early Fathers, the Vedas, and other Hindu scriptures, the Bible, works on Buddhism, the Mahometan and the Chinese scriptures, and books on devotion.

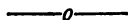
They say thou art gloomy and morose. Thy asceticism is said to have made thee melancholy and mad.

Believe me, I am a joyful ascetic. I do not mortify the flesh for mortification's sake. My asceticism means not sorrowful renunciation of the world, but rather rejoicing in the Lord. Look at me ; joy is on my forehead, and cheerfulness in my eyes. In all innocent amusements you will find me ; pure dance and theatricals, children's sports, manly games, feasts and festivities please me. Painting, music, and flowers are my delight. Little children are to me lovely poetry.

Let me read to thee the last count in the bill of indictment. They accuse thee of hating and neglecting thy family and children and leaving them to their fate while thou pursuest thy missionary calling with selfish devotion.

Learned Judge, the change is untenable. I love my kinsfolk with excessive and tender

love. And I am dutiful too. My solemn duties and responsibilities to my wife and children I never for one moment disregard or violate. I am a faithful householder, but not a worldly man. As a servant of God I serve those whom Providence has entrusted to me, always treating them as He bids me. I feed them and clothe them with the food and raiment the Lord provides.



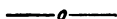
## OUR IDEAL MAN.



MERE prayers and struggles without a definite ideal generally prove fruitless. Man reels and staggers, turns to the right and to the left, in spite of his loftiest devotions and holiest endeavours, unless he is steadied by the attraction of a fixed object of pursuit. Let us fix our destination, and the vessel of life glides steadily towards it. The followers of the New Dispensation ought to keep constantly before their mind's eye, the Ideal Man of the New Dispensation. The Minister wishes and suggests that wherever our brethren assemble for daily worship, the picture of the Ideal Man should be clear-



ly set forth and his attributes and qualifications repeated day after day, as then the congregation will bear in mind their distinct mission, and earnestly strive after it with singleness of purpose. As the priest reads, the members of the congregation shall say, Ay or Nay, in their hearts, according as they have realized or not the particular virtues enunciated in the text. The following description of the Ideal Man is recommended for general use. [The priest :—Dearly beloved brethren, these are the virtues of the Man of the New Dispensation. Say, if ye have attained these virtues.]



I LOVE and honour woman as the daughter of God, cherish no unchaste thought or inclination.

I love and forgive my enemies, and provocation never makes me angry.

I rejoice in the prosperity of others and am not jealous or envious..

I am humble and lowly, and there is no pride or vanity in my heart, neither pride or rank, nor pride of wealth, nor pride of learning, nor pride of power, nor pride of piety.

I am an ascetic ; I take no thought for the morrow ; I seek not, I touch not the earth's

treasures. Only that which comes from Providence I receive.

I serve those entrusted to my guardianship to the best of my ability, and always strive to train my wife and children to righteousness and devotion.

I am just and give every man his due. I pay bills and wages in due time.

I speak truth and nothing but the truth, and hate all manner of lying.

I am kind to the poor and anxious to relieve sufferings. I contribute regularly to charities according to my resources.

I love others and labour always to promote the welfare of mankind. I am not selfish.

My heart is set on God and on things above. I am not worldly-minded.

I believe in One God and wholly discountenance idol-worship.

I believe in universal brotherhood and do not recognise caste.

I value and accept truth in all sects and in all scriptures, and am above the sin of sectarianism. I believe that truth and holiness are confined to no Church.

I believe in all the dispensations of God and

in all the prophets and saints through whom He has spoken at sundry times.

I believe in science as God's revelation, and hate everything that is unscientific.

I always cultivate the eclectic religion of the New Dispensation in its many-sided aspects—love, communion, asceticism, wisdom, work—and never seek any one of these to the exclusion of the rest.

To Christ and other masters I am intensely loyal To faith I add personal attachment and reverence.

I am always trying to establish in myself and in the world the harmony of all creeds, the science of religion.

I have seen my God, and heard Him, and am exceedingly *happy* in Him.

---

I AM all things to all men. To me says—

*A Christian* : Verily thou art a Christian, and not far from the kingdom of heaven.

*A Hindu* : Thou art a genuine Hindu and the Rishis dwell in thee.

*A Buddhist* : I look upon thee as one of us, and already Nirvana smiles on thy face.

*A Jew* : Thou art a pure Theist and a strict Jew, and Jehovah is thy God.

*A Mahomedan* : We hail thee as a believer in Islam and a follower of our Prophet.

*A Yogi* : Thou art like a venerable yogi absorbed in tranquil communion.

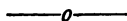
*A Bhakta* : In rapturous love thou art verily a Vaishnava ; for, thou art intoxicated with devotion to Hari.

*A Gnyani* : Thy wisdom is deep and among philosophers I would give thee an exalted place.

*A Karmi* : Surely thou belongest to the body of Karmis or workers, for thou art unwearied in philanthropy and thou always goest about doing good.

*A Vairagi* : To me thou art none other than a self-denying ascetic, and thy life proclaims thee a faquir.

Thus they all claim me, they all honour me.  
Blessed be the New Dispensation !



## AGAINST SUPERSTITION AND UNBELIEF.



IN trying to escape the horrors of superstition one should take great care not to dash against the rock of scepticism, where grim doubt

and death make shipwreck of unguarded humanity, and men and women daily perish in numbers. Between the Scylla and Charybdis of superstition and infidelity, who can lead our frail bark securely into the heaven of the New Dispensation? None but the Divine Captain ! Let us take note of the danger on our way, and watch and pray that we may be saved from both these evils. S is superstition ; U is unbelief ; N is the New Dispensation. Beware of S and U, and pass on safely to N.

S. God speaks to me.

U. God never speaks to man.

N. God has spoken at sundry times and does still speak to men.

---

S. Behold the fire in the bush.

U. Divinity nowhere.

N. Fire of Divine presence everywhere.

---

S. The vedas are the only scriptures.

U. No scripture written by God.

N. He writes the truths of all scriptures.

---

S. God have I seen.

U. None can see the unseen or know the unknowable.

*N.* Though Incomprehensible, Him every devotee can see with the spiritual eye.

---

*S.* Only my religion is true, all the rest is false.

*U.* There is no true religion.

*N.* Every religion is saving so far as it inculcates truth and purity.

---

*S.* Mahomet alone is the apostle appointed by God to save mankind.

*U.* There is no apostle, no prophet.

*N.* All saints, reformers and martyrs, and the leaders of all great religions are Heaven-sent apostles.

---

*S.* Christ is the way.

*U.* Christ was an impostor.

*N.* True sonship, such as Christ taught and exemplified, is the way.

---

*S.* Only this river is holy.

*U.* No water is holy.

*N.* All water is sacred when it reveals God.

---

*S.* Take me, exclude the rest.

*U.* Exclude all.

*N.* Include all.

OUR SOCIAL CODE.

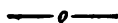
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THE NEW DISPENSATION render a new social code indispensable and inevitable. Faith must reach the solid ground of life, or it cannot stand. If we have reformed our ideas and feelings, must we not reform our domestic and social life? If the light of a new faith has entered the chambers of the heart, surely it will burst upon all the affairs of our daily life, and upon all the varied relationships and obligations of our social existence. All over India, men and women, the young and the old, are being leavened consciously or unconsciously, with the high and broad principles of the new Gospel. Soon will these persons with new ideal rise to demand—if they have not already demanded—new rules of life in keeping with those ideas. A new code of social rules is thus the demand of the age. If not detailed laws and by-laws, at least the general and fundamental principles of social purity and happiness, the emancipated and spiritualized India of the New Dispensation most urgently demands. Who can be deaf to the cry? If the code in demand is not forthcoming, the romance of the present Dispensation will evaporate after

a time as a shadowy beauty, and pass away as the baseless fabric of a vision. Mere theology may shine and burn for a while, but it cannot last. Nor is it likely to spread or find favour. A New System of eclecticism made up of the truths and principles of all religions, may shine like yonder rainbow in the high heavens, but men will not trust it if it is wanting in reality. Life alone can recommend a creed to the acceptance of mankind. Is the Gospel of the New Dispensation a mere combination of theologies or is it eclectic truth exemplified in eclectic life? Surely the light vouchsafed by the Lord unto this nation is the light of life as well as doctrine. It is not merely the union of Hinduism and Christianity and Buddhism ; it is also the union in life of Jesus and Chaitanya, of Gotama and Moses, of Yoga and Bhakti, conscience and wisdom and love. In our *understanding* the *lights* of all ages, and in our *character* the *lives* of the saints of all ages shall be amalgamated in a beautiful synthesis. The man of the N. D. must mould his daily life, perform all social and domestic ceremonies in his house, such as marriage &c., and regulate his dealings with his wife and children, his parents, and brothers and sisters, his masters and servants, according to a definite



social code, in which the examples of all saints and prophets shall be duly harmonized. Such a New Code, such a New *Samhita* let us ask the Lord to give us.



## OUR POLITICS.

WE do not care to dabble in politics. It is beyond our province. But so far as there is religion in politics, we are bound to uphold and vindicate it. The earthly sovereign is God's representative, and must therefore have our allegiance and homage. We look upon Victoria as our Queen-Mother, and we are politically her children. She sits upon the stone as India's mother, guardian, and friend, protecting the lives and property of her million children, redressing their just grievances, and promoting their material and moral prosperity, and helping them to attain political and social manhood. She represents law, order and justice, and is appointed by Providence to rule over us as a mother is appointed to look after her children. Therefore, we love her and honour her, and consider loyalty to be as sacred as filial obedience.

an who hates his sovereign is morally as  
 ble as he who abhors and maltreats his  
 r or mother. Sedition is rebellion against  
 uthority of God's representative, and there-  
 against God. It is not merely a political  
 ce, but a sin against Providence. Disloyalty  
 fidelity are convertible terms, so thoroughly  
 e British Government in India identified  
 the saving economy of Providence. The  
 ch of the New Dispensation, historically  
 esult of England's rule in the East, reli-  
 ly the effect of Western thought upon the  
 n mind, is profoundly thankful to Empress  
 ria, more so than any other Church or  
 on of the community. So long as we believe  
 e New Gospel we shall eschew disloyalty  
 noral evil, involving treasonable ingratitude  
 denial of God in History. The British  
 rnment may be weak and even vicious, yet  
 ull command our respect and allegiance so  
 it is a divine force. This is our *principle*  
 alty towards the person of our sovereign.  
 ve our Queen as our mother.

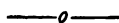
## OUR SECULAR WORK.

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WE do not consider our religious and secular work apart. The one forms a part, and most important part of the other. The principles of a religion are tested by its practical activity. This in its outward relations takes the form of various secular work. We, therefore, wish to point out briefly the different departments of practical activity in which the New Dispensation is engaged at the present moment. In the first place the Mission office has to be mentioned. Its principal work is to support our missionaries and their families numbering about sixty souls. Funds have to be collected from various sources and kept up. The Brahma Mandir or Tabernacle has to be looked after, repaired and enlarged. There is a printing press which has to be managed and maintained in a state of efficiency. Dwelling houses for the missionaries have had to be built and repaired. The work of the Mission office is heavy and important work. In the next place we may mention our schools. The Albert College is a flourishing institution which educates carefully hundreds of boys from every section of the Hindu community. And the Victoria College

or the Ladies' Institution which has been recently started is attended by fifty or sixty ladies, once a week, to hear popular and practical lectures on different subjects. In the third place there is the newspaper department. A weekly popular Journal in Bengali, two weekly Journals in English, one fortnightly and two monthly magazines in Bengali have to be edited and circulated among all classes of the community, and written severally for both the sexes, for the common people, and for children. In the fourth place we may mention our book department. Tracts, lectures, treatises, and hymnbooks have to be composed and published. Commissions have to be undertaken to sell books sent from foreign countries, or published by outsiders. Publications have to be issued in serials. And we may state that our book department yields us the largest income. Our department of charity is gradually enlarging in its scope and operations. Every description of paupers has to be looked after, but special attention has to be paid to respectable families that have been reduced to a state of poverty. Boys whose parents have no means have to be educated, sick persons have to be sent to hospital, and taken care of while there, and orphans have to

be provided for. The female improvement department is regaining its usefulness. The Ladies' Institution is regularly imparting wholesome ideas to the large numbers of matrons and young women who frequent it. The Arya Nari Somaj looks after their spiritual improvement. And the ladies' journal serves to help both these bodies. We have an organization to check Intemperance in the land, the management of which has been taken in hand by our young men. They issue a highly interesting publication. Lectures are occasionally delivered. And the Band of Hope promises to be a success. With so many practical agencies at work the New Dispensation claims to have a spiritual and a secular side, the combination of which makes the Church complete.



## THE HARMONY OF THE MAN OF THE NEW DISPENSATION.



THE man of the New Dispensation is a man of harmony. It is not intellectual harmony of which we speak. It is a spontaneous, heaven-sent harmony. His heart is drawn instinctively to every great principle and ideal in the world.

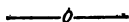
His nature by its own impulses assimilates every form of religious excellence within itself, and struggles to harmonize it with all the rest that is in it already. The most incongruous things present a charming congruity to him. The most dissimilar things are bound by a hidden similarity. His harmony is capacious. No variety or apparent discord can bewilder his vision, but he sees Divinity in every divergence, and in every species. Historically this harmony first offered itself thus. In the Brahma Somaj at first there was the reconciliation of philosophical systems. All the philosophical schools contributed their quota to produce the theistic philosophy whose principles were simple and universal. Then this harmonious philosophy developed into catholic devotions. A new order of divine service emerged out of God's Church which gradually embodied in itself every element of worship, meditation and prayer that has ever characterized any known religion. The Christian form of hymn-singing, sermon, and prayer for the remission of sins was there. The Buddhist spirit of meditative self-absorption was there. The Hindu spirit of Yoga and Bhakti was there. The former was seen in the conscious union of the soul with God in adoration

and meditation. The latter was seen in the enthusiasm and excitement of love which distinguishes the popular Vaishnava singing. There was the Mahomedan spirit of Sufi mysticism in the figures, sentiments, and language used. These various elements of divine worship formed the second great stage of harmony in the heart of the man of the New Dispensation. The future stage of harmony was practical usefulness. The man of the New Dispensation perceived that if worship was not harmonized with activity, the heart could have no peace. Hence began the work of reform. There was social transition outside, and within there was the desire of serving God. And the two together warmed by the spirit of true prayer took the form of many-sided practical activity. The man of the New Dispensation began to institute and work. He worked among the men, teaching and preaching. He worked among the women giving them knowledge and holiness. He worked among the poor giving them virtue and light. He worked among the sick and needy, dispensing relief. He worked among the young and wealthy checking intemperance and impurity. He was forward in education, in loyalty, in building homes and Churches, in founding

societies, and schools, in writing, speaking, working, and in every other manner of useful practice. The office of the New Dispensation opened early and closed late. But the harmony did not end there. He was struck by the harmony of prophets, and the harmony of the dispensations they brought. He had a spiritual perception of the great souls of ancient and modern times, surrounding as it were the infinite perfection of God, and each singing a great song of salvation as he learned it from the Eternal Voice. All ideals made to him one Ideal, all great men made one Great Humanity, and all religions went to form one great Religion. This was the harmony of dispensations. But he found a further harmony still in the events and men around him. He was not confined to the past. The present offered to him the harmony of all harmonies. Each one of the men in God's household was to him a living principle born of the Eternal, and sent with an apostolic mission. To the man of the New Dispensation his Church is a harmony of souls. To him life is a harmony. Every department of life harmonizes with every other department ; domestic, social, personal, moral, friendly, official, all make up one life, each perfect in its way, the duties of each merging



into the obligations of the others. To the man of the New Dispensation nothing is so distasteful as disharmony and enmity. He who is born to reconcile all discords and quarrels, whose work it is to marry the past with the present, how can he be carried away by the quarrels of the present ?



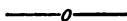
### THE FUNCTIONS OF THE NEW DISPENSATION CHURCH.



A CHURCH or a brotherhood is not merely a fact of the mind, but it is an outside reality. The household of God is not only a subjective idea, but an objective fact. The Church rules. Can an opinion with a man creates out of his own thoughts rule him ? Every man forms his own opinions about the Church of God according to his own tastes and convenience, and wants to be as it were his own Church. But the household of God, which is the embodiment of His will and providence too often contradict our tastes and convenience. He that is ready to sacrifice both to be true to the church is a man of the New Dispensation. The Church promulgates doctrines. Can every individual

man be the promulgator of his own doctrines ? Every man has his own conceits and fancies, and idiosyncracies ? When the Church contradicts them, there must be full and immediate obedience. The Church is the fountain of liberty, and knows where to bind and where to set free. The Church is the authority which must settle all disputed points, and dispose of every final appeal. Individual men may be swayed by individual prejudices, and decide unjustly. But the Church is many-sided, and represents every phase of sympathy and impartiality. The Church, therefore, can have the only authority that will establish harmony amidst the conflict of personalities. The Church lays down disciplines which are applicable to all, and applicable to every man according to his capacity and tendency. If men like to propose for themselves personal disciplines and modes of life, let them do so, and carry their asceticism to as high a pitch as they wish. But the Church will lay its own disciplines for Universal adoption. And these no man shall set aside. The Church is the source and director of all missionary agencies. Operations for the spread and conformation of the religion of the New Dispensation must be inaugurated, maintained, and directed by the Church. Every

individual is welcome to devote his powers and energies to missionary work, but this work must be sanctioned, blessed and consecrated by the Church. The principles of missionary life and work must be entirely regulated by the spirit which is embodied in the Church. The Church must thus be constituted into an independent and powerful reality competent to rule, instruct, discipline, guide, and wage war with every form of untruth and unrighteousness.



### WHAT AND HOW THE MINISTER TEACHES.



[*From the Sunday Mirror of May 9, 1880.*]

*M.* Do you know I am the worst sinner among you ?

We would not believe it.

*M.* So it is. I say the truth. Believe.



*M.* Ye are not my disciples.

We believe we are.

*M.* No, you are not. Ye are my friends and co-workers, valued instruments I am thankful for.



*M.* Why do ye call me a prophet ? I am not worthy of the title.

*M.* Beware. Put me not in the rank of prophets, for thereby ye insult them and contaminate your own hearts with a palpable lie. A servant of all the prophets—this is my title.

*M.* Ye wish to imitate me and follow me. Yes, we do.

*M.* Do not, for imitation is death, and blind obedience is slavery. Imitate and follow your God. He among you who says I am your master and can save you, tells an untruth. May my Father teach you and lead you ! Deny me as a teacher, deny me.

*M.* If you regard me as a teacher do you criticize my teachings ?

Yes, we judge critically.

*M.* Ye should not. Neither shall ye receive aught from me for my sake, nor shall ye deny and reject my words for your learning's sake. Ask your God in every instance whether what I say is truth or not, and accept or discard as He directs you.



## DIALOGUES.



HAVE you just returned from the Himalayas ?

Yes.

D

Did you enjoy the place ?

Oh, very much.

And did you see Mahadeo there ?

Oh yes, and spoke to him.

And did He speak to you ?

Yes.

Did you see any of the ancient Aryan Rishis there ?

Yes. They are all living there in spirit.

Did you draw near them ?

Yes, we sat together and had sweet intercommunion.

Did you see them bodily present ?

No. I saw only disembodied spirits with the spiritual eye.

Did old Himalaya speak to you at all ?

Certainly he did. Hoary-headed venerable Himalaya proved my preceptor, and helped me to see the Great Mahadev.

Was not the old mountain sleeping for centuries ?

Perhaps he was. But he is awake, he is said to have received a commission from Heaven which must be executed.

What sort of commission ?

I am told Himachal has received orders to

reveal and glorify once more the ancient mountain Deity of India.

But will it be done in the old Vedic style ? Not wholly. Modern civilization and ancient asceticism shall be harmoniously mingled.

Who told you all this ?

Himalaya and all his surroundings.

Everything there seemed to speak of the glorious commission entrusted to Himalaya ; and the good day is coming.

What do you mean ? Any flood expected ?

Yes, from the Himalayan height a flood of new Yoga and new inspiration shall come down to the plains, and wash away infidelity and worldliness, impurity and sorrow.

I thank you, brother, for the good news.

Mere thanks will not do. You must prepare. Spread the intelligence far and wide, and tell everybody to prepare for the *pahari* inspiration which awaits us all. All India and wife shall be called upon to receive the new inspiration from the hills and become *grihastha yogis*. Is not this good news ?

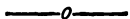
Cheering. I hope educated India will attend to the matter properly.

Old Himalaya means to send messages to all

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the devout spirits in the land, inviting them to drink the waters of true Yoga.

Grand ! Truly grand ! Men and women will all go on pilgrimage to Father Himalaya to receive the waters of life. How refreshing and cheering the thought ! Good bye, I must go and give my wife and children this glad news.



## THE BEATITUDES.



BLESSED are they who have found peace in the Lord.

Blessed are they whose heads are established under the Lord's feet and whose eyes are fastened thereto.

Blessed is he who hath nothing to call his own but who hath sold his all and himself unto God.

Blessed is he who attaineth all by giving his all.

Blessed is he who cherisheth a clean conscience.

Blessed is he of whom the Lord saith ' I am well pleased with my servant.'

Blessed are they who have made the Lord their meat and drink, their light and joy.

Blessed is he to whom the Lord saith, Fear not, weep not, for I AM WITH THEE.

Blessed is the child that can say, I am Thine }  
O God, and Thou art mine.

Blessed are they whom the Lord giveth food and raiment, counsel and strength, comfort and purity, and whom he leadeth in all things as His own.

Blessed are they who in the joy of the Lord forget pleasure and pain, honor and dishonor, riches and prosperity, life and death.

Blessed are they who love and honor them that have made themselves the dust of the Father's feet.

Blessed is he who suffereth poverty that others may be enriched and dishonor that others may find honor.

Blessed is he who with his own blood washeth the feet of his brethren.

Blessed are they who love God as their Father and Mother, and man and woman as brother and sister, and make the world their home.

Blessed are they that trust their heaven appointed Captain in the hour of peril.

Blessed are they that dwell together as a family beneath the feet of the Lord, and always love one another though persecuted and insulted.



Blessed are they that touch not the bread that man giveth, but feed on the rice the Lord sendeth.

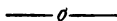
Blessed are they that rejoice in the midst of trial and tribulation.

Blessed are they who accept the whole Dispensation as divine.

Blessed are they who weep as soon as the brother weeps and rejoices as he rejoices.

Blessed are they who never complain but submit to the decrees of Providence.

Blessed are they whose eyes and ears are turned upward to see and hear the Sweet Supreme Spirit.



## NEW YEAR'S DAY EPISTLE.



KESHUB CHUNDER SEN, a servant of God, called to be an apostle of the Church of the New Dispensation, which is in the holy city of Calcutta, the metropolis of Aryavarta.

To all the great nations in the world and to the chief religious sects in the east and the west.

To the followers of Moses, of Jesus, of Buddha, of Confucius, of Zoroaster, of Mahomet, of Nanac, and to the various branches of the Hindu Church.

To the saints and the sages, the bishops and the elders, the ministers and the missionaries of all these religious bodies.

Grace be unto you and peace everlasting.

Whereas sectarian discord and strife, schisms and enmities prevail in our Father's family, causing much bitterness and unhappiness, impurity and unrighteousness, and even war, carnage and bloodshed.

Whereas this setting of brother against brother and sister against sister in the name of religion has proved a faithful source of evils and is itself a sin against God and man.

It has pleased the Holy God to send unto the world a message of peace and love, of harmony and reconciliation.

This New Dispensation hath He in boundless mercy vouchsafed to us in the east and we have been commanded to bear witness unto it among the nations of the earth.

Thus saith the Lord—Sectarianism is an abomination unto me and unbrotherliness I will not tolerate.

I desire love and unity, and children shall be of one heart even as I am One.

At Sundry times have I spoken through

my prophets, and though many and various my dispensations there is unity in them.

But the followers of these my prophets have quarrelled and fought and they hate and exclude each other.

The unity of Heaven's messages have they denied, and the science that binds and harmonizes them their eyes see not and their hearts ignore.

Hear ye men, there is one music but many instruments, one body but many limbs, one spirit but diverse gifts, one blood yet many nations, one church yet many churches.

Blessed are the peace-makers, who reconcile differences and establish peace, good-will and brotherhood in the name of the Father.

These words hath the Lord our God spoken unto us, and His new Gospel He hath revealed unto us, a Gospel of exceeding joy.

The Church Universal hath He already planted in this land, and therein are all prophets and all scriptures harmonized in beautiful synthesis.

And these blessed tidings the Loving Father hath charged me and my brother-apostles to declare unto all the nations of the world, that being of one blood they may also be of one faith and rejoice in one Lord.

Thus shall all discord be over, saith the Lord,  
and peace shall reign on earth

Humbly therefore I exhort you, brethren, to  
accept this new message of universal love.

Hate not, but love ye one another, and be ye  
one in spirit and in truth even as the Father is  
One.

All errors and impurities ye shall eschew, in  
whatever church or nation they may be found,  
but ye shall hate no scripture, no prophet, no  
church.

Renounce all manner of superstition and error,  
infidelity and scepticism, vice and sensuality,  
and be ye pure and perfect.

Every saint, every prophet and every martyr  
ye shall honor and love as a man of God.

Gather ye the wisdom of the east and west,  
and accept and assimilate the example of the  
saints of all ages.

So that the most fervent devotion, the deep-  
est communion, the most self-denying asceticism,  
the warmest philanthropy, the strictest justice  
and veracity, and the highest purity of the best  
men in the world may be yours.

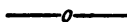
Above all, love one another and merge all  
differences in universal brotherhood.

Beloved brethren, accept our love and give



us yours, and let the east and west with one heart celebrate the jubilee of the New Dispensation.

Let Asia, Europe, Africa, and America with diverse instruments praise the New Dispensation, and sing the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man.



## GLOSSARY.



HEAVEN—That exalted state of the soul in which it is near to God in purity and joy.

HELL—Darkness and sin in the soul.

SEEING GOD—Vivid realization of the Divine Spirit within and without.

HEARING GOD—Realization of Divine authority in the dictates of conscience and the holy impulses of the soul.

TOUCHING GOD—To feel the Lord's besetting presence.

YOGA—Quiet and solitary communion with the Supreme Spirit.

PRAYER—The begging attitude of the soul and strong hungering after spiritual blessings.

**COMMUNION OF SAINTS**—Devout and loving apprehension of the characters and examples of saints in the heart.

**INSPIRATION**—Outpouring of the spirit of God in the human soul.

**REGENERATION**—Beginning of the higher spiritual life as distinguished from the lower carnal life.

**ECSTASY**—Joy in the Lord.



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**QUERIES**

**AND**

**ANSWERS.**

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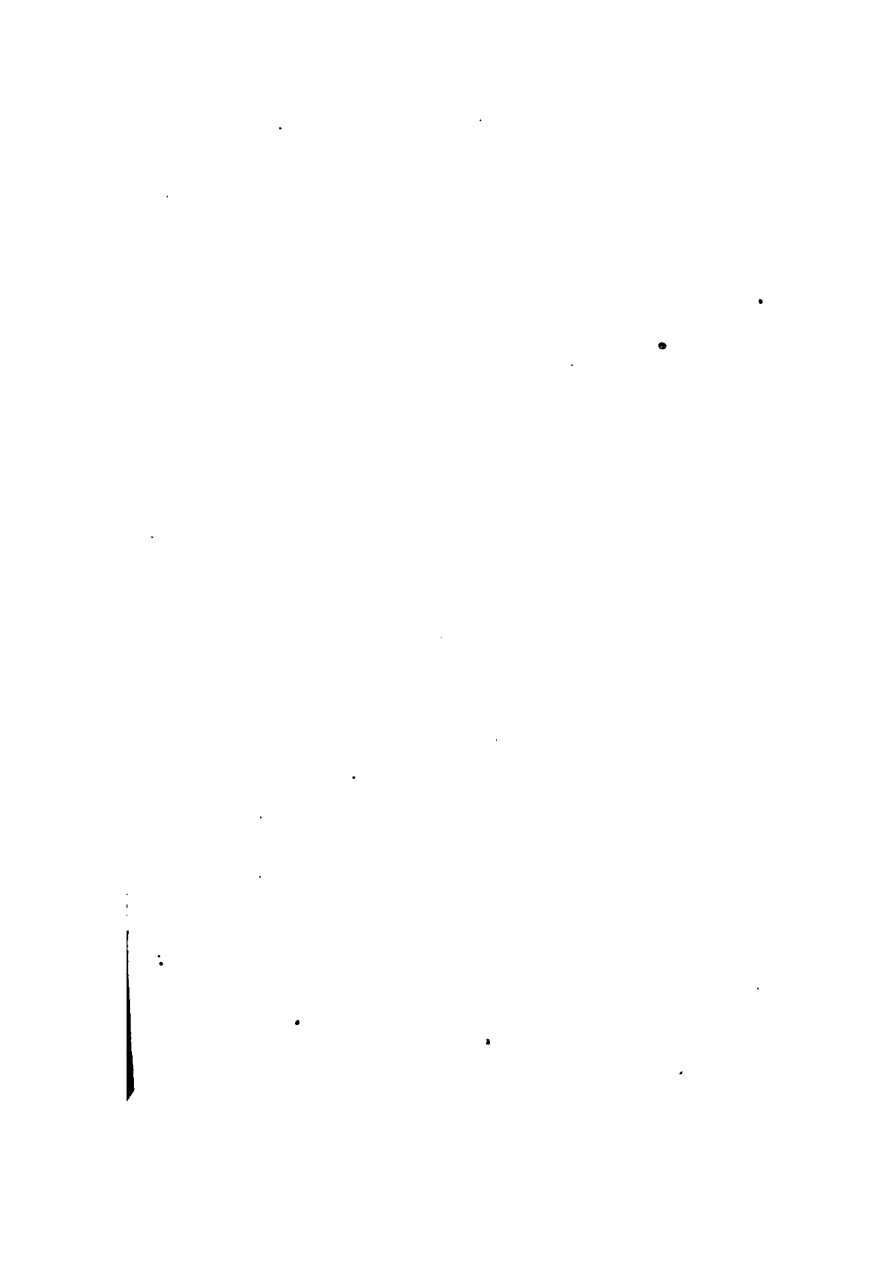
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## INTRODUCTION.

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“The Queries and Answers” are printed from the old file of the *Indian Mirror*. The Queries were on different occasions asked by the late Krishna Bihari Sen and others to the Minister who returned their answers. As the Queries and Answers relate important matters connected with the Brahmo Somaj and Brahmo life, it is hoped that their publication in its present form will be useful to the readers.

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# QUERIES

AND

## ANSWERS.

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### THE BRAHMO SOMAJ.

Q. Is the Brahmo Somaj a creed or a spiritual force?

A. A spiritual force.

Q. Is it making much progress now-a-days?

A. Indirectly, not directly. The Brahmo Somaj fails to make formal converts from the ranks of Hinduism, but it effectively leavens Hindu society with its spirit. Educated India unconsciously imbibes its reforming influences.

Q. From what source can one gather a knowledge of the weaknesses and failings of the Somaj?

A. From its own leaders. They tell their own faults more faithfully than their worst enemies.

Q. What is the chief cause of the success of the Somaj?

A. Not money, not men, but Prayer.

Q. Is there any Brahmo who has obtained salvation?

A. No, none.

Q. Is it likely that the Brahmo movement will merge finally into Hinduism ?

A. All weak-minded and half-hearted Brahmos will fall back upon Hinduism in the course of time.

Q. Are there any four Brahmos among whom true brotherhood has been realized ?

A. No.

Q. What is the chief enemy of spiritual progress among Brahmos ?

A. Dryness of heart.

Q. Is the Brahmo Somaj really a gigantic movement such as some of its staunchest admirers represent it ?

A. No, it is a small Church, but the power of truth is in it.

#### BRAHMOS AND OTHER RELIGIONISTS.

Q. Are the Brahmos superior to Christians in spiritual culture ?

A. They are decidedly inferior. They do not possess anything like the spirit of martyrdom and self-sacrifice which characterizes Christ's disciples.

Q. Are the Brahmos superior to the Hindu community ?

A. Far from it. In matters of communion, self-control, and the enthusiastic love of God the Brahmos stand far behind.

Q. And as regards Mabomedans ?

A. They too are superior to the Brahmos, in the regularity of their daily devotion. How *punctually* they pray, wherever they may

happen to be, five times during the day ! Surely the Brahmos are backward in this respect.

#### IS IT A FIXED CREED ?

Q. Is the religion of the Brahmo Somaj a fixed creed, the same yesterday, to-day and forever ?

A. No. It is, a progressive faith. It is not to-day what it was twenty years back. Every year, every month shows its development. It teaches to-day a much more exalted standard of faith, devotion and duty than it ever inculcated before.

#### DIVISIONS.

Q. It is likely that the Brahmo Somaj should be split up into many sections in the course of time ?

A. Quite probable ; nay it seems inevitable ?

Q. Are the Progressive Brahmos popular among their countrymen ?

A. They are extremely unpopular on account of their crusade against idolatry and caste, but they are nevertheless, respected by many for their moral character.

#### LEADERSHIP.

Q. Are they under competent leadership ?

A. Evidently not. They have none among them who is strong enough to preserve discipline and unity among them or lead them on

to truth and victory. In time they may have a better and worthier captain.

**BRAHMO LIFE.**

Q. Are the Brahmos proud or are they humble?

A. They are remarkably humble in their prayers, but they are proud in their lives, arrogating to themselves a superiority which they do not really possess. The leaders do not bow to each other, and the followers do not bow to their leaders.

Q. What is it that the outside public very much detest and deplore in the Brahmos?

A. Their hollow pretension and ambitious professions.

Q. Are the Brahmos happy in their faith?

A. Those among them who humbly and sincerely pray are extremely happy in their devotion. Those who worship a dry divinity with dry hearts and despair of their own progress are miserable.

**BRAHMO PRAYER.**

Q. Is Brahmo prayer very sweet?

A. Yes, very sweet.

Q. In what does this sweetness consist?

A. In the perception, with the eye of faith of the tender and benignant countenance of the Loving Father.

**PURITY.**

Q. Is the Brahmo Somaj the pure Church of God, as many represent it?

A. The true Brahmo Somaj is indeed God's own Church, but the Brahmo Somaj we see is only a caricature unworthy of the ideal.

#### SOCIAL REFORMS.

Q. Has the Brahmo Somaj done any thing in the direction of social reform which may convince those of its utility who do not believe in its theology?

A. Yes. It has promoted religious as well as social reforms. It has furthered the following reforms among its members ;—1, the remarriage of widows ; 2, intermarriage between members of different castes ; 3, abolition of bigamy and 4, early marriage ; 5, education of women ; 6, dissolution of caste ties ; 7, temperance ; 8, loyalty.

#### RELATIONS WITH OTHER DENOMINATIONS.

Q. Are the Brahmos cordially treated by Christian missionaries ?

A. They used to be, but are not.

Q. Among what classes of their own countrymen are the Brahmos most disliked and hated ?

A. Among sceptics, unbelievers, and those who are given to drink.

Q. Do orthodox Hindus hate them ?

A. They hate their renunciation of idolatry, and caste, but highly esteem them if they are devout and honest.



Q. What traits of Brahmo character are specially liked by the Hindu community?

A. Humility, forgiveness, asceticism, abstinence from wine and meat, solitary meditation, rapturous attachment to God, self-control.

Q. Does Brahmo life show continued progress?

A. The Brahmos advance up to a certain point, and then they seem to recede.

Q. Is it impossible to attain high spirituality?

A. No. Many Brahmos attain it, but few retain it.

Q. Is it possible to subdue the carnal nature completely and renounce all vicious habits?

A. It is possible theoretically. But no Brahmo has set an example whereby this may be verified.

Q. How should Christian and Brahmo missionaries act in relation to each other?

A. Like allied forces they should combine to combat idolatry.

Q. What relation ought to subsist between the Brahmos and orthodox Hindus?

A. They should co-work heartily as kinsmen to conserve the higher elements of devotion and piety to be found in the national faith, and save them from the encroachments of modern civilization and foreign vices.

#### WANTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS.

Q. What is it that is wanted in the Brahmo community?

A. Steadiness.

Q. Are there cases on record of Brahmos who have died in peace, resigning themselves calmly and trustfully into the hands of the Lord?

A. Yes, there are cases which prove that a Brahmo need not be afraid of death.

#### IDOLATRY.

Q. Are all Brahmos bound to forsake idolatry?

A. Yes, because according to their creed idolatry is a falsehood.

Q. Have all Brahmos forsaken idolatry?

A. The majority have not.

Q. Is it true that the Brahmos hate those who worship idols?

A. Far from it. Those among idolatrous Hindus who are sincere, pious and earnest are highly respected by the Brahmo community, more so than educated Natives who scoff at all religions.

#### SUCCESS.

Q. Are the Brahmos as much disliked now by their non-Brahmo countrymen as they were before?

A. No, they are rather more popular now than before.

Q. Among the successes and failures of the Brahmo Somaj are there more successes than failures?

A. More failures certainly than triumphs.

Q. In what parts of India has the Somaj the greatest chance of success?

A. In Bengal and the Punjab.

Q. What is the extent to which the religion of the Brahmo Somaj has spread in India?

A. Among all educated Natives who have any regard for religion and who have not embraced Christianity, the Brahmo Somaj has established its kingdom. All such men are Brahmos in heart, whether they take the Brahmo name or not.

#### BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND LOYALTY.

Q. Is the action of the British Government adverse to the spread of the Brahmo movement?

A. No, rather favorable. All state colleges and schools are disabusing the minds of Native youths of idolatry and prejudices, and indirectly leading them into the Brahmo Somaj. These institutions are most helpful to the destruction of popular superstitions and the progress of the Brahmo cause.

Q. Does the creed of the Brahmo Somaj make men disloyal?

A. Far from it. Brahmoism enjoins the most fervent loyalty. There is none in all India so profoundly and sincerely loyal to the Queen's Government as a genuine Brahmo.

Q. Does a Brahmo then quietly and uncomplainingly submit to the errors and misdeeds of the Government?

A. No. He regards the errors and corrup-

tions of the governing body as human and seeks constitutional means of remedying them, but the Government itself he looks upon as a divine ordinance and he reveres it with warm loyalty.

Q. What are the motives of Brahmo loyalty?

A. It is not servile allegiance based upon fear or the prospect of worldly gain. There is nothing worldly in Brahmo loyalty. It is dictated by pure faith in providence and gratitude for benefits derived. It is not attachment to particular men, but homage to a Divine institution.

#### RELATION TO GOVERNMENT.

Q. Does the Brahmo Somaj hang upon the patronage of the British Government?

A. No. The Church of God depends not upon earthly governments. The Almighty arm alone supports it.

Q. Does the Somaj then look for no favours from Government?

A. It will never stoop to ask for its leaders, nor money for the advancement of its cause. If our men seek titles and honors from Government in order to exalt their position before men they vitiate themselves and degrade their Church. If we seek State subsidy for the propagation of our faith we dishonor God and His Church.

Q. Do Brahmos seek aid in secular matters?

A. Yes; in matters affecting the material and moral welfare of the country, such as political reforms, the diffusion of education

legislative interposition for the redress of social grievances &c. The State is morally bound to help us in these things.

#### INDEPENDENCE.

Q. It is generally held that Brahmo Missionaries have no independence and are slavishly obedient to their Leader. Is this a fact?

A. No. The Leader on principle encourages independence among the missionaries, and in fact they all enjoy the fullest independence. They do not hold themselves accountable to any individual or council. They may accept or abandon any work; they may sit idle at home or go out to any station on a preaching tour as they wish. They may publish any book, review or article, and give any lecture without being subjected to criticism or control. They may live on public contributions or seek supplementary aid in other ways. They will have no one to interfere with their work and habits of life. If they take charge of any department of work, they must be invested with absolute power and authority, and they are sure to resign if there is the slightest interference. Each has his own peculiar habits and tastes and ideas and ways of doing things, which are most jealously guarded. Slavish obedience means dull uniformity and servile imitation which are both conspicuous by their absence among our missionaries. It is too well known that if the Minister has any weakness, it is this that he is too tolerant and forgiving, never *interferes* and seldom punishes.

MORALITY.

Q. Are the more devout among the Brahmos growing in morality as they are evidently growing in devotion ?

A. Of late years there has been a marked growth of devotional fervor, solitary contemplation, ascetic austerities, and sweetness of prayer among the more advanced Brahmos. But unfortunately there has not been a corresponding elevation of moral character. Amid the development of the softer emotions the sterner virtues seem to have been somewhat neglected, such as veracity, justice, forgiveness, frankness, self-surrender. We have also noticed the growth of mutual jealousy, pride, vanity and selfishness among our best men.

SCHISMS AND DIVISIONS.

Q. Are further schisms and divisions possible in the Brahmo Somaj ? How far are they probable ?

A. Further schisms are not only possible but inevitable in a Church based on such unbounded freedom as the Brahmo Somaj. This is specially true of that advanced and free body known as the Progressive Brahmos. They must break into parties according as their peculiar opinions and tastes develop themselves in the course of time. There shall arise among us socialists, spiritualists, secularists, political Brahmos, sceptical Brahmos, materialists and such other bodies. But the probability of such parties

organizing themselves into hostile "sects" will depend upon the measure of jealousy and personal animosities that may be involved in the strife. True Brahmoism is the religion of love and cannot foster or encourage sectarianism. It admits of and will tolerate multiplicity of parties and sections and an endless variety of opinions, but it regards sectarianism as a sin. Those who are jealous and are actuated by personal malice and spite must fall out and set up schisms and sects, which, however, will disappear as soon as angry feelings subside and love and charity return. Among Brahmos, therefore sects are probable only so far as deep jealousy and bitterness are likely to break out among contending parties.

#### MORALITY AND RELIGION.

Q. If religion is not morality in some cases as you say, what is the good of religion? Mr. Mathew Arnold has somewhere defined religion to be "morality tinged with emotions." Without accepting this definition as correct, may we not say that religion is something (call it *x*.) based upon morality? If a man is religious and not moral, is he not irreligious, if not *un*-religious?

A. Religion is not based upon morality. Morality is based upon religion. It would be more correct to say that morality, or rather moral purity, is one of the fruits of religion. If religion undergoes due development and grows *into a strong stout tree* it must in the fullness

of time yield fruits and among them purity of character. But if it is weak and undeveloped, it manifests itself only in the shape of mere emotions and convictions, struggles and endeavours, prayers and aspirations, all good in themselves, but not strong enough to conquer sin. It is not enough that a man should be religious and prayerful, but his religion must be fruitful. Religion without morality is an imperfect, undeveloped and abnormal something. Its perfection is moral purity and sweet communion, righteousness and devotion. Let those who are religious only strive to be more religious, and they will necessarily be moral men as well.

#### HABIT OF READING.

**Q.** Do you advise the Brahmos to cultivate the habit of reading? What books would you generally recommend?

**A.** Reading is surely useful if it is good reading. It is better not to read at all than to read books that mislead or pollute the mind. The best of all books is the volume of one's own life, then comes the volume of nature spread before us. The following books may then be recommended for study:—The Bible, especially Psalms, Gospels and Paul's Epistles; Bhagavat, Book XI; Victor Cousin's Eclectic Philosophy; Tulloch's Theism; Philosophy of Common Sense by Sir William Hamilton; Max Muller's Science of Religion; Channing's Works; Theodore Parker; Miss Cobbe; Dr.



Martineau ; Professor Newman : Ecce Homo ;  
Reason in Religion.

#### BRAHMO'S BELIEF IN SPECIAL PROVIDENCE &C.

Q. Can one be a Brahmo and not believe in the doctrine of Special Providence? Can one be a Brahmo and not believe in the doctrines of Inspiration and Great Men?

A. These doctrines are not included in the fundamental creed of the Brahmo Somaj, and hence those who enter the Church may or may not accept them. There are, we believe, hundreds who have no idea of providence or inspiration, and yet they are Brahmos, if only they believe in the essential principles of Theism. The more spiritually-minded and advanced members of our community are, however, bound to accept these deeper doctrines of our faith. To them the existence of God is quite as essential a doctrine of Theism as special providence, and they can no more disown God than they can His providence.

#### THE PROTEST MOVEMENT.

Q. Will the present protest movement in the Brahmo Somaj last?

A. It will last only so long as there are ill-feeling and money sufficient to keep it up and enough interest in rationalism and secularism *to justify a separate movement.*

## CULTURE OF RELIGION AND MORALITY.

Q. If morality is based upon religion, why is it that religious culture does not bring along with it a corresponding development of morality in our Church? How can I be religious and moral at the same time?

A. Morality is based upon religion, and must grow with its growth. But if religion undergoes an abnormal development, if the emotions are cultivated apart from the will, if duties are deliberately neglected and impurity carefully cherished, then the result must inevitably be immoral religion or rather immorality and irreligion under the garb of piety. In order that religion and morality may be associated together, they should always be simultaneously cultivated and particular attention should be paid to the eradication of evil habits with the help of religious feelings duly excited. We must get into the habit of applying our daily prayer and communion to our daily life. We must daily examine our hearts with a view to detect and uproot secret sins and overcome favourite passions. There is no hope of sanctification unless conscience is perfected by prayer.

## THE CAUSAL THEORY.

Q. The Minister, in the first lecture at the Theological School, pronounced the causal theory as applied to the existence of God to be a mistake. Has not the argument from

design, then, any moral or religious value to the student of nature ?

A. The argument from design is, no doubt, *a* proof, but not *the* primary evidence of the existence of God. Like other secondary proofs it only helps to confirm and illustrate the main argument, but is not sufficient in itself as a basis of the Theist's faith. Self-consciousness supplies the chief argument, and after faith is firmly established upon this secure and impregnable foundation, we may profit greatly by studying the illustrations of Divine Wisdom and Goodness and Power in the marks of design scattered throughout the universe.

#### PANTHEISM.

Q. What is the best and surest way to refute pantheism ?

A. A strong appeal to the pantheist's own consciousness is, we believe, best calculated to disabuse him of his errors. He may in contemplation merge himself in the Divinity, but he cannot regard himself as *infinite* in power, wisdom, or holiness. He may liken himself to a drop lost in the ocean. But his consciousness tells him he is not the ocean. As regards the other phase of pantheism which seeks to identify the material universe with God, it is easy to prove that matter is not spirit, and cannot, therefore, be identified with Supreme Intelligence.

ST. PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF ASCETICISM.

Q. Those who have wives should think as if they had none. Will you kindly explain to me how this desirable state of mind can be brought about?

A. Those who have wives, says St. Paul, are anxious in all things to please their wives. Those who have no wives, endeavour to please the Lord. Let them that have wives try always to do the will of Heaven, and love the Lord above their wives. Let them discharge all their household duties, but always in a thoroughly ascetic spirit, sacrificing carnality and worldliness on the altar of a passionate and enthusiastic love of God. The devout husband must think it a sin to be governed by the wife. To please God, and not to please the wife, should be the object of his life.

BRAHMOISM FOR MASSES.

Q. It is the opinion of many that Brahmoism may be accepted by the educated few, but that it will never be the religion of the people. Is there any truth in this?

A. Brahmoism, in its higher and more spiritual aspects, can never be the religion of the masses. Only the more educated and advanced will appreciate and accept it. To make it popular we must invest it in *forms* and outward ceremonies of an attractive character, which, however, must be wholly unidolatrous and harmless. To be acceptable to the masses, it must be

presented in its more emotional, practical and ceremonial aspects. In Brahmoism there is food for the baby soul and the adult soul alike.

#### ABSTINENCE FROM ANIMAL FOOD.

Q. Should a Brahmo refrain from animal food?

A. Abstinence from animal food is not one of the essential doctrines of Brahmoism, and among the advanced and more devout Brahmos there are men who eat meat, and others who do not. The latter think it right to be on the safe side. They would abjure as much of carnal luxury as they possibly can, consistently with the health of the body and the soul. They love simplicity, and would be content with the necessities of life, and avoid the luxury of tasting meat and blood. They would also avoid doing anything which might and does, especially in this country, encourage others to eat and drink, and be carnal. We are taught to shun whatever is a stumbling block in the way of our brother.

#### INJUNCTION OF GOD.

Q. Is a man justified in regarding that as an injunction of God which is in itself morally wrong?

A. God cannot, and never does, contradict Himself. That which is in itself morally wrong such as lying, dishonesty, murder, sensuality *is contrary* to the will of God, and can never,

therefore, be enjoined by Him "Injunction of God" and "morally right," are convertible terms. Whatever is commanded by Heaven is and must be right. That must be evil which is prohibited by the Lord. If God Himself speaks through conscience, how can His direct injunction be different from, or contrary to the dictum of conscience? He is the same always. His teaching cannot be self-contradictory.

#### CHRIST AND CHRISTIANITY.

Q. How would you harmonize Chaitanya with Christ?

A. It is quite possible to love and honor Christ, and yet be a devoted disciple of Chaitanya. The former represents self-surrender, the entire dedication of one's life to the will of God. The latter represents the enthusiasm and tenderness of love, emotional excitement and sweet devotion. If the true believer approaches Christ in the spirit of Chaitanya, he will be pure as well as tender, and combine strict loyalty with sweet emotion. He will be able to serve God with an obedient and active will, and love him with a tender and passionate heart.

#### INITIATION.

Q. Is the ceremony of initiation indispensable to the Brahmo? Can there be no salvation without it?

A. The ceremony has hardly any value except as a form of admission into the visible Church

of God, and as a means of securing all the advantages of fellowship in religion. But apart from these advantages it has no intrinsic value, and it has nothing to do whatever with a man's salvation. One who has never been initiated may be as near the kingdom of heaven as one who has been. Yet we recommend the ceremony, because it is essential to the organization of all true believers into a consolidated brotherhood for mutual improvement and the effective dissemination of truth.

#### CHRIST ON THE JUDGMENT SEAT.

Q. In our Minister's last Town Hall lecture I find (in page 9) the following passage :— "As his spirit rolled backward and forward, up and down the circular stream he (Christ) found himself, in the past, dwelling in God, even before creation, and in the future, rewarding believers and rebuking unbelievers assembled after death before the judgment seat." In connection with this I may also say that I find the following passage in St. John, Chap. v. :—"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."

Will you kindly explain what these passages mean ?

A. Jesus Christ declared himself to be the embodiment of the moral law whereby men should be guided in their relations towards each other. Christ means, if his life means anything more *than another*, "Thy will be done, not mine."

He represented the Will of God. According to that will, or the moral law as interpreted by him in his life and teachings, especially in the Sermon on the Mount, must his followers be judged. To them he is not only a teacher and guide, but the rule of action and the law of life. They are in all ages and climes amenable to that law, and they are wholly responsible for its observance, amid the temptations and trials of the world. By no other law shall they be judged, but by this. No convenient code of ethics made by their own hands will they be able to plead in defence of their transgressions during their trial. When they are judged before the tribunal of conscience the law-representing Jesus must acquit or convict them. They learn the truth from Christ. He enlightens them. And he lives permanently in their hearts as the Law to rebuke and furnish offenders. He is unto them both light and judgment.

#### IS GOD HUMAN?

Q. If the finite suggests the infinite, is not the Infinite God essentially anthropomorphic?

A. It is true we conceive God's love through our love, and His power through our power. But we do not make ourselves the measure of His attributes. If we did so, that would surely be anthropomorphism. For we would then clothe Divinity not only with love, but also with the limitations of love, such as anger, jealousy, cruelty, favoritism, &c. As soon as we add infinity to the Divine attributes, a human God becomes impossible.



## DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY.

**Q.** Professor Newman thinks that the doctrine of immortality is not a necessary element in the Theist's creed. Do you think a man's faith and uprightness in moral behaviour receive a check if he dispenses with that belief altogether?

**A.** The Theist's creed is incomplete without the doctrine of immortality. If he is bound to believe in God, he is equally bound to believe in the next world, as the two are necessarily and indissolubly connected together. Half truth is not truth. If a man rejects the truth about the next world, he is so far guilty of being untrue, and he must suffer for this falsehood in his creed. His character must suffer, because his idea of moral government must be lax and hazy, and his so-called reverence for God's justice and holiness must prove a baseless fiction. A man may attain morality in some measure without this doctrine; but it is only the shadow of morality, and not the real and complete form of righteousness which Heaven demands of us, and which can only be realized by a perfect faith in the completion and the consummation of God's moral government hereafter.

## THE MISSIONARIES AND THEIR WIVES.

**Q.** How far are the wives of missionaries liable to the discipline and sufferings of their husbands? Is it not true that the missionaries

have been called to their work, and not their wives? Why should, then, the latter be compelled to share in the privations and sorrows of their husbands?

A. The Brahmo Somaj of India cannot compel the wives and children of missionaries to accept or practise the vow of asceticism which is applicable to the missionaries only. Our Church does not, and cannot, force poverty upon any of its members. Those who choose to give up the service of Mammon and become poor for the Lord's sake are welcome to do so. If the wife does not wish to adopt the principles of asceticism, the Brahmo Somaj is bound still to give her maintenance and comfort. If she is not quite happy, it is owing, perhaps, to paucity of funds at the disposal of the Mission. It is also natural that a devoted wife must, to some extent, participate in the anxieties and sorrows of her missionary husband. Nothing, indeed, could be better than for the husband to exercise such influence upon the wife as would make her follow his path, and make them one in poverty. So long as that is not the case, the present anomaly must continue, and the Somaj, while giving the ascetic's simple fare to the missionary, settle a moderate monthly allowance for his wife and children.

#### IS GOD KNOWABLE?

Q. Modern philosophers call God an unknowable God; the Upanishads declared Him to be *Nirguna*; and Christ said—"No man

hath seen God." In what sense then do you call the Father knowable ?

A. Although God being Infinite is not cognizable by human reason and is, therefore, unknowable ; although He is not possessed of human qualities and passions, and is, therefore, *Nirguna* ; although He is a spirit and, therefore, invisible and unseen, yet His nature is partially known to us. His power and knowledge, love and purity, we understand in some measure.

#### THE CHARGE OF MANWORSHIP.

Q. The charge of countenancing man-worship has again been preferred against the Minister of our Church. If false, will you kindly again declare it to be so ? These lies ought to be contradicted as soon as they are uttered.

A. There is not a single man among the Minister's immediate friends and followers, so far as we know, who regard him as anything but a religious leader and a valued friend, destined to instruct them and help them under Providence. The very idea of *worshipping* him is to them a sin and an abomination. In their modes of addressing him there are found sometimes exaggerations, which are peculiar to eastern nations, and which have been, times beyond number, applied to many other Brahmos as well. Had the Minister countenanced and encouraged man-worship, the evil would have, *by this time*, grown into formidable proportions.

But the exaggerated honors which were at one time paid to all our leading missionaries fell into desuetude simply because they were quietly but persistently discouraged, and the emotional excitement which gave rise to them gradually subsided. The fact that they were discouraged and discountenanced is confirmed by the two remarkable cases of apostacy which occurred at Monghyr in consequence of it. Two Brahmos, who had been slowly drifting away into abnormal excitement, expected the Minister to declare himself a miracle-working prophet. This he did not, and they soon went away and embraced the creed of the *Kartabhajas*.

#### THE NEXT WORLD.

Q. Theodore Parker says:—"If tomorrow I perish utterly, then my fathers will be to me only as the ground out of which my bread-corn is grown. I shall know no higher law than passion. Morality will vanish." Is the argument used here a strong one? Whence do we get the strongest testimony to the existence of another world, taking it for granted, of course, that we do not believe in a book revelation or miracle?

A. Morality will surely vanish if there is no faith in the next world. This argument, however, only points to the evil consequences of disbelief; but it cannot be accepted as a testimony in support of the doctrine of immortality. The best argument is that drawn from the mere

fact of self-existence. Whoso believes in self and in God, is bound to believe in immortality.

#### NOT VISION BUT SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

Q. Mr. Voysey, in his recent sermon said —“He (Babu K. C. S.) tells us of his visible intercourse with John the Baptist, then with Jesus, afterwards with the Apostle Paul; and although we have no grounds for believing that these visions were anything more than simple delusions, there is really some ground for believing that he drank deeply of the spirit of all these men.” I have never believed in the reality of these “visions.” Will you kindly let me know if I am right?

A. The Minister, in the course of his lecture distinctly said that he had never in his life had a religious dream. As a true Theist he has no faith in visions, and always treats them as delusions. Had John or Jesus or Paul ever appeared before him as a vision, he would surely have laughed at it as a mere delusion and a phantom. And he distinctly says he never had a vision. All that he meant was that he had, while reading the Gospel, held spiritual intercourse with three living characters recorded there. Not the dead letter, but the living spirit of the book stood before him and spoke living words of fire which thrilled him. The Minister preached nothing but the sober Theistic doctrine of living communion with the spirits of departed saints. Such communion is daily possible in the life of every individual Brahmo.

### ARE PROPHETS SINLESS ?

**Q.** When our Minister says that prophets are holy men, does he mean that they are sinless ?

**A.** Absolute holiness belongs only to the God-head. As regards the character of the prophets, the Minister has often been heard to say that he is not competent and that he is not authorized to pronounce any opinion on their merits. His idea is that he is not to judge, but to bow reverently. He has no right to criticise their moral character, but must love and revere them as heaven-sent prophets.

### THE DIVINE AND HUMAN IN PROPHETS.

**Q.** How would you distinguish between the human and the divine in prophets ?

**A.** Just as we distinguish truth from error, virtue from vice. Weakness, impurity, doubt, despair, selfishness, these represent the human side of prophets. Their divine side is represented by inspiration, authority, genius, super-human energy, faith, love, hope, communion and joy. Whatever is good is of God ; all the rest belongs to man.

**Q.** Was Christ all divine or partly human and partly divine ?

**A.** Christ was both divine and human. He was the Son of God ; he was also the son of man. But in him the Son and the Father were united in one will. Christ was " Thy-will-be-done" incarnate.

IS SAKYA MUNI A PROPHET ?

Q. If Sakya Muni was an atheist or rather an agnostic, how could he be a prophet in the sense in which we use the term ?

A. There was neither atheism nor agnosticism in Buddha. Only he did not recognise a separate and personal Divinity. Nirvan itself was his Heaven, his God and his Salvation : it was his all in all. He did not look up to a Person, but to a divine condition of the soul at once moral and spiritual in the highest degree. Sakya Muni possessed all the qualifications of a prophet,—faith, moral greatness and great self-denial. In order that one should be a prophet, it is not necessary that his life and creed should fully tally with our ideas and doctrines,

ADESH AED INSPIRATION.

Q. Is inspiration possible to all men ? If so, what would be the necessity for prophets ? If not, how would you explain the doctrine of *adesh* ? Are inspiration and *adesh* convertible terms ?

A. Yes, inspiration is possible to all men, and there are facts in our individual lives which bear testimony to this. Ordinary men's inspiration cannot, however, revolutionize society or create new life in nations. For such purposes prophets are needful. *Adesh* is simply a command or injunction. It may only enlighten and guide us, or it may come upon us as a

heavenly shower of light and a sanctifying force and convert our whole life. In the latter case only is it inspiration.

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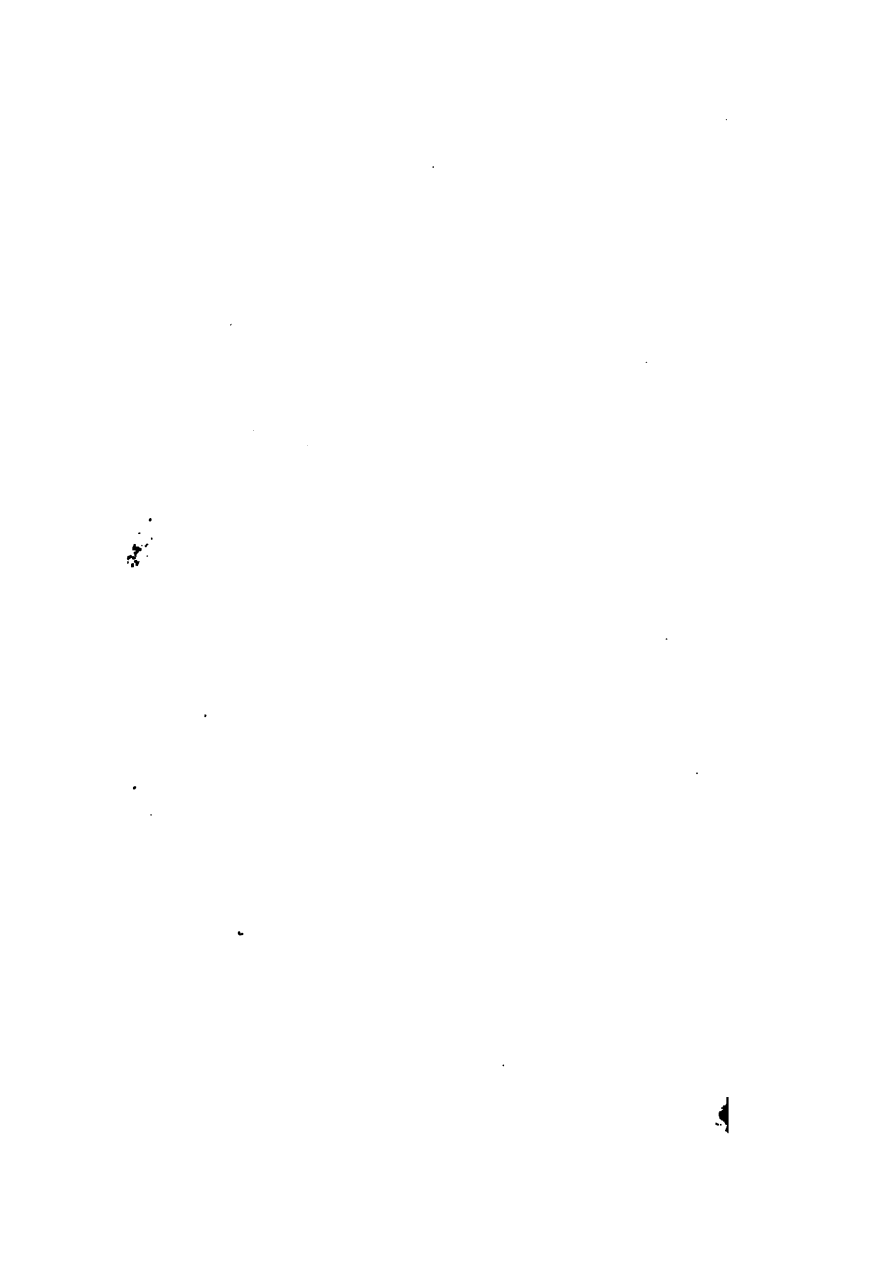
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